U.S. AUTOMAKERS AWAITING BAILOUT, PG 5

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OTTAWA • TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2008
metronews.ca

Deficit needed: Harper

PM admits that boosting economy will cost billions of dollars

Prime Minister Stephen Harper says the Conservative government will have to run a budget deficit to bring in billions of dollars' worth of recovery programs for the hard-hit economy.

"We're talking about spending billions of dollars that was not planned," he told CTV's Atlantic affiliate in a preview of the Jan. 27 budget.

"We want to bring in some recovery programs that will help us sustain economic activity and avoid some of the worst problems, particularly in some of the sectors that you're familiar with," Harper said. It was an apparent reference to the struggling manufacturing, auto and forestry industries.

"We're going to have to run a deficit, do some spending measures we hadn't planned on doing. But I think, if we do those things, we should be able to come out of this (economic downturn) pretty strong in due course."

It was Harper's most explicit statement so far that the Conservative minority, which was nearly ousted from power for not boosting the economy, plans a significant stimulus package in next month's federal budget. Harper said he regretted the political uproar set off by the Tories' Nov. 27 economic package. But he said he believes the Conservatives would win another mandate if Parliament were dissolved for an early election.

TARA WALTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Liberal MPs John McCallum, left, and Scott Brison address with the media in Toronto yesterday afternoon after meeting with Finance Minister Jim Flaherty. McCallum said Flaherty seemed "more serious" about helping to kick-start the economy with an economic stimulus package.

Earlier, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty met with senior Liberals to discuss the possible contents of the budget. Liberal MP John McCallum said during the closed-door meeting Flaherty admitted that economic forecasts in his November update were too optimistic.

And Flaherty appears more inclined toward bringing in an economic stimulus package than in months past, McCallum added.

"On the growth forecast, he acknowledged that, since the fiscal update, the economic outlook has deteriorated and that really has some implications," McCallum said in an interview.

McCallum and Liberal MP Scott Brison spent most of the 50-minute chat with Flaherty driving home Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff's argument that it's impossible to recommend new spending measures to help the economy without believable information on the state of Ottawa's finances.

Brison said the Liberals hope Flaherty will provide them with new numbers before Dec. 25.

Flaherty also seemed "more serious" than in the past about including measures in his upcoming budget to kick-start the sputtering economy, McCallum reported.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Getting realistic

- On Nov. 27, Flaherty told the House of Commons that Ottawa would run slim budget surpluses this year and next and that the economy would grow by 0.3 per cent in 2009. With the Bank of Canada now saying the country is going into a recession, those predictions are generally seen as much too rosy. Parliamentary budget officer Kevin Page, for example, has said the federal budget deficit could balloon to $14 billion next year.

Gas-station robber eludes cops

SEARCH Police are looking for an armed robber after a canine track failed to locate a suspect after an incident at a west-end gas station early yesterday morning.

At 4:16 a.m., police responded to a call at the Esso gas station at 1660 Merivale Rd., where minutes before, a lone male armed with a shotgun entered the store.

The man pointed the shotgun at the clerk and demanded money and cigarettes. He made off with an undisclosed amount of both.

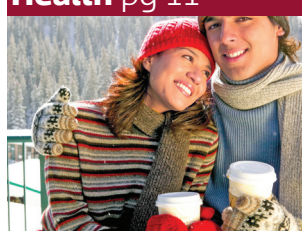
Police were on scene within minutes of the call. A track by a K9 officer was unsuccessful.

The suspect is described as a white male in his early 20s. He was wearing blue sweatpants, a sweatshirt and steel-toed boots. He covered his face with a tuque.

Anyone with information on this robbery is asked to call the Ottawa police robbery unit at 613-236-1222, ext. 5116.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

Health pg 11



Holiday romance

Entertainment pg 12

Brandy gets personal

Sports pg 10

Junior team named

ShareYourViews
ottawaletters@metronews.ca

Pedestrian killed in tractor-trailer crash

TRACEY TONG
tracey.tong@metronews.ca

FATALITY A 51-year-old man is dead after he was struck by a tractor-trailer while walking on Highway 417 in the city's east end yesterday afternoon.

Ottawa paramedics said the collision occurred in the westbound lanes of Highway 417 near Anderson Road at around 4:36 p.m.

Paramedics, who declared the man dead from "multi-system trauma" shortly after they arrived on scene, said it's unclear why he was walking on or near the highway, said paramedic spokesman J.P. Trottier.

"He was struck by a tractor-trailer at high speed," said Trottier.

The Ontario Provincial Police is now investigating the incident.

Meanwhile, Ottawa police have identified the elderly couple killed in an earlier fatal collision on Albion Road.

> **"He was struck by a tractor-trailer at high speed."**
> J.P. Trottier

Ottawa resident and driver of the vehicle Brian Ludlow, 73, and his wife, Joan, 72, were killed Sunday night after Ludlow attempted to pass another vehicle while heading southbound on Albion Road.

Police learned from interviewing witnesses that Ludlow encountered another vehicle that was approaching from the opposite direction.

Ludlow allegedly attempted to return to his lane, but lost control and was struck by the approaching vehicle, driven by a 28-year-old male.

The 28-year-old male driver suffered minor injuries and was treated and released from hospital.

Alcohol was not a factor in the case.

Road conditions were made poor by freezing rain in the evening.

Ottawa police Const. J.P. Vincelette said yesterday police reported a total of 84 collisions in a 24-hour period ending Sunday at midnight.

Free Daily News Group Inc., operating as Metro Ottawa 130 Slater Street, Suite 300, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6E2. Publisher: Bill McDonald

Carleton Tavern seeks food, gift donations for Christmas dinner

The Carleton Tavern is seeking donations for its free community Christmas dinner later this month. Donations of turkeys, ham and baked goods as well as new gifts for adults, kids and pets can be dropped off at the Carleton Tavern at any time. The dinner is held at the restaurant from 11 a.m to 3 p.m. on Christmas Day. METRO OTTAWA

Local

City releasing tunnel update

The City of Ottawa will give an update of the study looking into a proposed downtown transit tunnel, including the preliminary tunnel alignments and station locations this afternoon. The tunnel is the key component of the city's new transit network, identified in the Transportation Master Plan and recently approved by a city council vote of 22 to 2. METRO OTTAWA

Ottawa's carpool widening

More commuters connecting online in face of city transit strike

TRACEY TONG
tracey.tong@metronews.ca

After the transit strike began last week, Jess Bentley didn't know how she was going to get to work.

The 23-year-old Mooney's Bay-area resident, who works downtown, relied on buses to get around the city. She didn't have the option of working from home or taking time off.

She posted an ad online, offering to chip in for gas for a ride. Now, she catches a ride every day with a woman who also works downtown.

"It's great," she said. "I give her $15 and she gives me a ride to work (everyday for a week)."

With the absence of buses on the roads, people are increasingly turning to websites like Ottawacarpool.ca, Kijiji and Craigslist to hook them up with lifts.

Wilf Koppert, program manager for transportation-demand management and cycling and pedestrian facilities for the city, said registration for the city-run Ottawa Ride Match at OttawaRideMatch.com has increased exponentially in the past few days.

> **"It's not only helping commuters, but (drivers) can get gas for free or have some company."**
> Wilf Koppert

The city partnered with Transportation Canada to develop the bilingual program about three years ago to help commuters travel within city limits, said Koppert.

Usually, there are about 700 to 800 people registered requesting and offering rides.

But Koppert said yesterday that number has climbed to about 9,300 people, with more likely to register.

"They keep adding servers to keep up with the demand," he said. "It's really gone up. It's more than double the total we've had in three years." The more people that sign up, the better the chance of getting a match, he said.

Organizers are looking to bring in a tracking system "to see how many people are actually carpooling, which is the measure of success of the program," he said.

Most people are either going downtown, or looking for rides to Tunney's Pasture or Confederation Heights, he said.

While about two-thirds of people on Ottawa Ride Match are seeking rides, the other third is offering them.

"We're looking for more drivers," said Koppert. "It's not only helping commuters, but (drivers) can get gas for free or have some company."

Changes would be step backward: Cornellier

TIM WIECLAWSKI
tim.wieclawski@metronews.ca

The picket lines were back in front of city hall yesterday as the first week of the transit strike drew to a close with no new negotiations taking place.

Responding to the letter sent to employees by the city's transit service director over the weekend, ATU Local 279 president Andre Cornellier released his own document detailing the union's position on the scheduling issues.

In the release, Cornellier wrote that the scheduling system they are fighting to keep stems from recommendations made in a KPMG report released in February 1999 when "relations at OC were at an all-time low and the operation of transit was in shambles."

According to Cornellier, the changes were freely agreed upon by both sides, but required the union to accept a reduced wage package and relax work rules to implement the new scheduling method. He insisted the union is not willing to change the scheduling provisions unless through a co-operative and non-threatening process.

"We will not return to the working conditions that helped create such a negative environment that led to the need for the KPMG study and other problems in the 90s," he wrote.

However, the proposed scheduling changes do not represent a return to the bad old days, insisted Mayor Larry O'Brien.

"The systems have changed substantially," he said. "At the time we reached that agreement there had been no new drivers hired for eight or nine years. There was a dearth of work. Now there is an abundance of work."

> **"The systems have changed substantially. ... There was a dearth of work. Now there is an abundance of work."**
> Larry O'Brien

O'Brien said management must be able to restructure the shift work in order to accommodate more than 100 million passenger trips per year that the system now carries.

He said the new offer enhances the safety of drivers and passengers by ensuring an eight-hour rest period for every 24-hour period and would also give drivers an extra day off in every two-week cycle.

O'Brien said they want to get back to the negotiating table as quickly as possible, but cannot remove the points the union disagrees with to resume talks.

TIM WIECLAWSKI / METRO OTTAWA

Striking OC Transpo employees were back at the picket lines in front of city hall in the rain yesterday morning as the first week of the transit strike drew to a close.

Strike hits city shops, but could aid tourism

BUSINESS If the transit strike goes past this week, it will be impossible for retailers at the Rideau Centre to recoup their lost revenue, the mall's general manager said yesterday.

One of the largest transit hubs in the city, the Rideau Centre, has seen a drop of around 30,000 people per day during the first six days of the strike, said Cindy Van Buskirk. That's 40 per cent fewer people entering the mall between 6 a.m., when it opens, and 2 a.m., when it closes.

Despite the traffic drop, Van Buskirk said its saving grace is that there is still a large number of people downtown who can easily walk to the mall.

Mid-December tends to be a slower time for tourists in Ottawa, but that easy walk around downtown has also been a blessing for tourism.

"We have a very walkable downtown core, so taxis and other methods of getting around are available," said Jantine Van Kregten, director of communications Ottawa Tourism.

Van Kregten said the strike could become an issue if it's still on during the IIHF world junior championships starting later this month.

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

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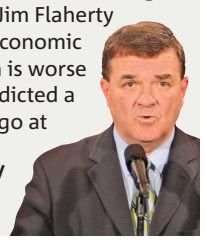
What's online today.

Read It may sound scary, but borrowing to invest can be a sound strategy at **metronews.ca/investing**

Video Jim Flaherty admits economic situation is worse than predicted a month ago at **metronews.ca/canada**



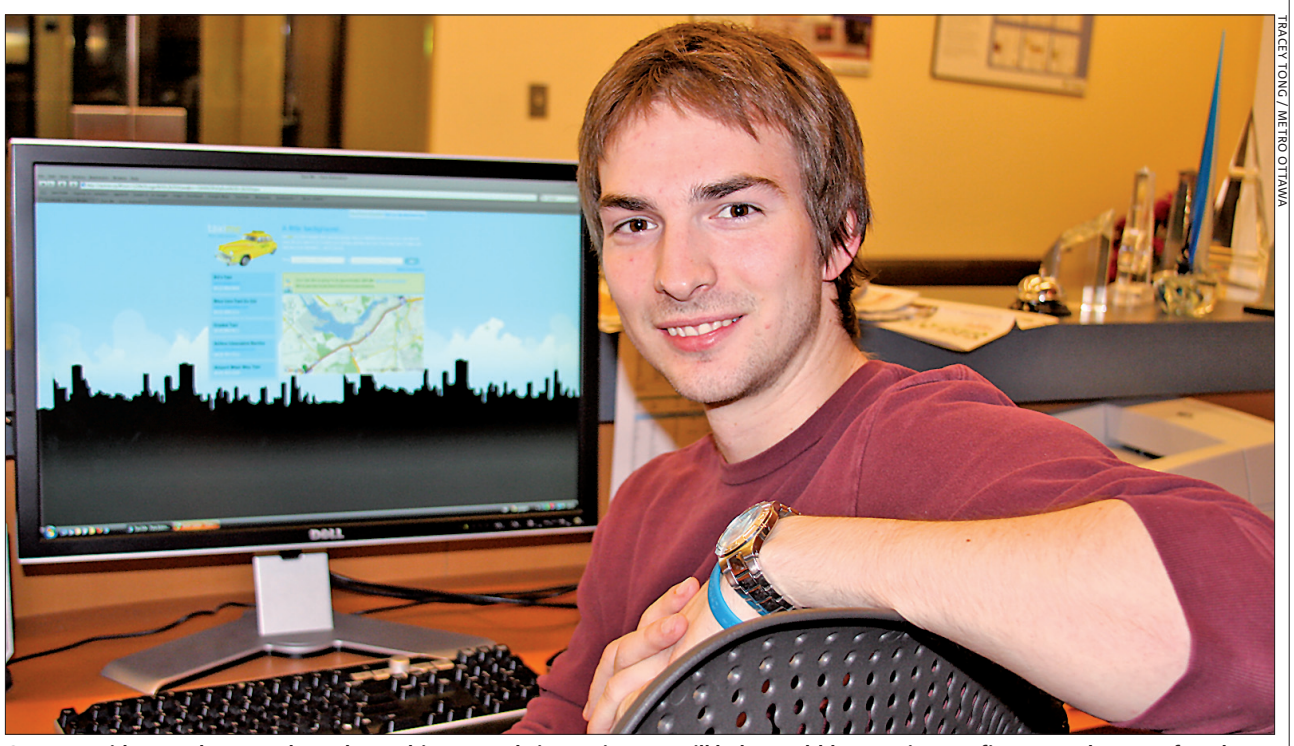
Lotteries

Ontario Pick 3: 3 4 1; **Ontario Pick 4** : 1 8 6 1
Encore: 9852624
Daily Keno: 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 28, 35, 38, 44, 47, 51, 54, 58, 60.
These results are not official.

German junior hockey team brings training to town
The German national junior hockey team will be holding its pre-competition training camp at the Robert-Guertin Arena in Gatineau starting Saturday. Yesterday, Canada's national junior team started its 2009 training camp for the IIHF World Junior Championship in Petawawa. METRO OTTAWA

Online cab calculator launched

TRACEY TONG
tracey.tong@metronews.ca


TRACEY TONG / METRO OTTAWA

Ottawa resident Jordan Boesch, 21, hopes his new website, taxime.ca, will help would-be transit users figure out the cost of a cab ride in the city.

As with most great ideas, Jordan Boesch's started with a dilemma.

Several months ago, the 21-year-old Ottawa resident was looking to take a cab home from the pub when he found himself wondering how much it would cost.

"It's an issue when you've only got a certain amount of cash left," said the downtown web developer.

Although he got home with money to spare that night, Boesch sat down at his computer a few weeks later and created a solution. He built Taxi Me Fare Estimation (taxime.ca), a website that calculates the cab fare needed to get you from point A to B.

The calculation system — which integrates with Google Maps to draw a map of the route and has tested to be accurate within one dollar for longer distances — has a new market this week as the city's transit strike moves into its seventh day.

"With the buses on strike, people are taking cabs more," he said. "I think people would be interested to know how much they would pay for a cab ride."

Since he's developed the site, Boesch has spent some time making small improvements. Although the calculator can be set up for use in any city, the settings default to Ottawa cab prices.

With a transit strike plaguing the city, the Algonquin College grad has had plenty of opportunity to test out his online tool.

Although he lives and works downtown, he walks most places, but uses taxis as well.

"It's inconvenienced a lot of people that I know," said Boesch of the transit strike. "A large chunk of my office lives in Barrhaven or Orleans, and I can see the frustration, especially at this time of year."

The site also includes a contact list of cabs in the city.

$80K grant for art groups involved in Shenkman Centre

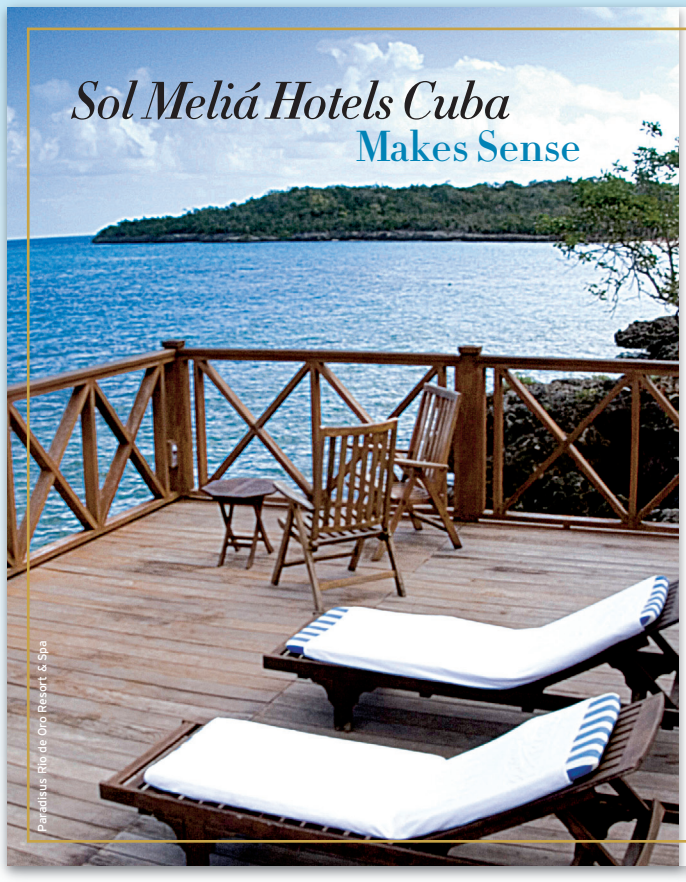
FUNDS An arts grant by the Ontario Trillium Foundation will allow more city residents to access programming at the new Shenkman Arts Centre when it opens next May.

The foundation announced an $80,000 grant in Orleans yesterday, which will help Arts Ottawa East, Gloucester Pottery School, Mouvement d'implication francophone d'Orleans and the Orleans Young Players Theatre School and Visual Arts Centre prepare for the growth they will face when the doors to the new centre open in May 2009.

The partners have already begun working with consultants on board governance, strategic planning, organizational development, human resource and volunteer management, financial management and marketing.

"Arts Ottawa East and its collaborative partners have provided excellent opportunities to showcase the impressive talent of our arts community," said MPP for Ottawa-Orleans Phil McNeely. METRO OTTAWA

AIR CANADA VACATIONS



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Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally

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TRYP Cayo Coco • 4★
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Standard rm.
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Taxes & fees: $229
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally
Please add $50 for Sat. & Sun. departures

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Sol Sirenas Coral Resort • 3★
All-Inclusive
Standard rm.
Feb. 1 - 23 • 1 wk.
$1429
Taxes & fees: $229
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally
Please add $50 for Sat & Sun. departures

Cayo Largo via Montreal
Sol Cayo Largo • 4★
All-Inclusive
Standard rm.
Feb. 7 & 14 • 1 wk.
$1499
Taxes & fees: $212
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally

Holguin via Toronto
Paradisus Rio de Oro Resort & Spa • 5★
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Steinke gets life sentence

Jeremy Steinke, found guilty Dec. 5 of three counts of first-degree murder, was sentenced yesterday to the minimum prison term of life, with no chance of parole for 25 years. Steinke, 25, and his former girlfriend, 12 at the time of the murders, were both convicted of killing the girls' Medicine Hat, Alta., parents and her brother in April 2006. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canada

Prisoners changing: StatsCan

The percentage of prison population that are women and aboriginals has been steadily increasing, says a Statistics Canada report released yesterday. Between 2001-02 and 2006-07, the number of women on remand has risen by 36 per cent. Over the same period, the number of aboriginals on remand has increased by 23 per cent. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

David Radler free on parole

David Radler, the long-time pal of fallen media baron Conrad Black who rose alongside him to wealth and power then turned against his former boss, was handed full parole yesterday after serving 10 months of his 29-month sentence for fraud.

Radler, the former Chicago Sun-Times publisher and president of Hollinger International, got caught along with Black and other executives over charges they siphoned funds from the company.

Radler, 67, pleaded guilty to one count of mail fraud in 2005 and paid back more than $61 million US in restitution after striking a plea agreement with federal investigators. He was fined $250,000.

"I made mistakes and they hurt me and my family and others," Radler said in Chicago court at his plea-agreement hearing.

"I made mistakes and they hurt me." David Radler

In 2007, Radler spent eight days on the witness stand testifying against Black as the prosecution's star witness. Black's lawyers called Radler a "serial liar" and one juror told the Chicago Sun-Times that the former executive's testimony didn't sway the guilty verdict against Black.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Maple Leaf **Cleaning an image**

STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A worker at a Toronto Maple Leaf plant shows new cleaning methods used on the slicers. The company allowed media to tour the plant yesterday as part of a campaign to restore public confidence after this year's listeriosis outbreak which killed more than 20 Canadians.

News in brief

HEALTH Colonoscopies are only effective at catching cancer that develops on the left side of the colon, says a study by Toronto researchers published yesterday. The researchers say that while the test is valuable, it only catches about one per cent of cancers on the right side.

ECONOMY The federal government, under pressure to aid a slowing economy, has asked the provinces to submit infrastructure projects that can get under way quickly, officials said yesterday.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Auto collapse would cost nearly 600K jobs: Report

ECONOMY Canada would lose at least 582,000 jobs — mostly in Ontario — within five years if the Detroit Three automakers go out of business, according to an Ontario report obtained by Torstar News Service.

The review, set to be released today, warns the collapse of General Motors, Ford and Chrysler would send lasting shock waves through the economy.

If auto output by U.S.-based manufacturers in Canada were cut in half, at least 157,000 jobs would be lost right away, including 141,000 in Ontario. By 2014, job losses would rise to 296,000 nationally. The losses would force the national unemployment rate upward by 0.6 per cent in 2009 and 0.2 per cent annually for the next five years.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Correctional Service Canada | Service correctionnel Canada

NOTICE OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Correctional Service Canada will be relocating the Ottawa Parole Office. Through a tendering process, Correctional Service Canada and Public Works and Government Services Canada have identified **116 Albert Street** and **500 Terminal Avenue** as potential relocation sites.

Correctional Service Canada is committed to taking into consideration the concerns and views of the community prior to relocating the parole office. Members of the public are invited to learn more about the role of the Parole Office in the community and provide comments via an Online Consultation tool at **http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/consultation** until December 23, 2008 or by attending Town Hall meetings taking place as follows:

For the 116 Albert Street site:
Tuesday, December 16, 2008, 7:00 pm – 10:00pm
Extended Stay Hotel (Victoria Room, 2nd Floor), 141 Cooper Street
Ottawa, ON

For the 500 Terminal Avenue site:
Wednesday, December 17, 2008, 7:00pm – 10:00pm
Hampton Inn, 100 Coventry Road, Ottawa, ON

The objective of this consultation is to inform and consult communities prior to the selection of the site. We welcome your attendance and your feedback.

For more information contact:
Ana Paquete
Area Director,
CSC Ottawa Parole Office
613-992-2307

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Some 330,000 still without power in N.Y., New England
More than 330,000 homes and businesses in the U.S. Northeast remained without power yesterday, four days after a fierce snow and ice storm left more than 1.3 million in the dark. National Grid PLC, which owns gas and power networks in the New York and New England region, said it hoped to restore power by midweek. REUTERS

World

Kennedy seeks Clinton's Senate seat?

Caroline Kennedy, the daughter of slain former U.S. president John F. Kennedy, is pursuing the Senate seat of Hillary Clinton, who has been nominated secretary of state, civil-rights activist Al Sharpton said yesterday. Kennedy, 51, spent part of her childhood in the White House until her father was assassinated in 1963 and since then has kept a relatively low public profile. REUTERS

Auto bailout expected

Treasury may announce rescue as early as tomorrow

The Bush administration could act as early as tomorrow to approve an automaker bailout from its bank rescue fund, with conditions likely to reflect at least those approved by the House last week, key lawmakers and other sources said yesterday.

A Treasury Department official said the agency and auto company executives continued to review financial and other information, and that no decision had been made. The White House is actively involved in the matter, officials said.

Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson said, however, the government would have to be satisfied the industry could survive and compete in order to receive help.

"We would have to assure ourselves that this was a step on the path to long-term viability," Paulson told Fox News.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a California Democrat, says the administration will likely use part of the $700-billion US fund established in October to stabilize the financial services sector, rather than pushing the companies into bankruptcy, as some lawmakers have urged.

"I think that all the signals coming from the White House are that they know that bankruptcy is not an option and that (stabilization) funds are the only recourse that they have."
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi

"That would be my expectation and I think all the signals coming from the White House are that they know that bankruptcy is not an option and that (stabilization) funds are the only recourse that they have," Pelosi said at a news conference.

General Motors Corp and Chrysler LLC, which is owned by Cerberus Capital Management, have said they need immediate injections of cash to avoid near-term collapse.

Ford Motor Co. is seeking a government line of credit to be used if its financial conditions deteriorate more than expected in 2009. REUTERS

Man who threw shoe has courage, Chavez says

POLITICS Venezuela's anti-U.S. president Hugo Chavez said yesterday that an Iraqi reporter who flung his shoes at President Bush was courageous.

Chavez, who has himself hurled insults at the U.S. president over the years, said he was glad the shoes didn't hit Bush but smiled broadly during a video of the incident played during a cabinet meeting broadcast on Venezuela television.

"It's a good thing it didn't hit him. I'm not encouraging throwing shoes at anybody, but really, what courage," he said.

"I'm not encouraging throwing shoes at anybody, but really, what courage."
Hugo Chavez

Iraqi journalist Muntazer al-Zaidi threw two shoes at Bush and called him a "dog" during a Baghdad news conference Sunday, an act that has won him instant fame across the world and support in the Middle East.

Chavez is a fierce critic of the U.S. war on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan and frequently calls Bush a "donkey," a "drunkard" or "Mr. Danger."

Most famously he called Bush the "Devil" during a speech at the UN headquarters in New York, sniffing the air and saying it still smelt of sulfur after Bush had left the podium.

During 10 years in office, Chavez has portrayed his socialist government as an alternative to the U.S. "empire." He promotes alliances with countries including Iran, Cuba and Russia to weaken Washington's influence on the world stage. REUTERS

New Thai PM faces big challenges

THAILAND Opposition leader Abhisit Vejjajiva became Thailand's third prime minister in as many months yesterday, taking control with a slim majority in parliament and an economy on the brink of recession.

In a sign of the trouble in store, 200 supporters of the government sacked by the courts two weeks ago blocked access to parliament after the vote and smashed windows of cars carrying MPs from his Democrat Party.

Chanting "Abhisit, army nominee," the red-shirted demonstrators denounced the 44-year-old as a front man for the military, which ousted elected leader Thaksin Shinawatra in 2006, and which has been accused of political meddling ever since.

Abhisit was backed by 235 MPs against 198 for the former government's candidate, but his majority is likely to take a hit on Jan. 11 when by-elections are held to replace 29 MPs fired earlier this month. REUTERS

Greece **Violent protest**

YIORGOS KARAHALIS/REUTERS

Protesters kick a policeman who detained another protester during clashes outside the police headquarters yesterday in central Athens. Police fired teargas at small groups of protesters who threw stones in a second week of anti-government demonstrations since a policeman shot and killed a teenager.

News in brief

NUCLEAR ARMS Russian and U.S officials met for talks yesterday, which Moscow's negotiator said could open doors for a new deal in nuclear arms control with Washington's next administration.

HEALTH A hospital quality improvement program nearly doubled the number of stroke patients given clot-busting drugs quickly enough to reduce their risk of permanent disability, a new study reveals.

LAWSUIT French first lady Carla Bruni-Sarkozy is suing a fashion chain for selling bags emblazoned with nude images of her in the latest legal action over the presidential couple's image. REUTERS

Illinois governor headed for inquiry

U.S. POLITICS Illinois lawmakers yesterday approved an inquiry into whether Gov. Rod Blagojevich should be impeached in the wake of charges he tried to sell the Senate seat vacated by president-elect Barack Obama.

The Illinois House of Representatives voted 113-0 to form a committee to determine whether that body should bring as yet undefined charges against him, which if approved would result in a trial in the state Senate and his possible removal from office.

Illinois House Speaker Mike Madigan — a Democrat like Obama and Blagojevich — told reporters in Springfield, the state capital, the charges might include "abuse of power."

"We are preparing for a trial in the (state) Senate."
Mike Madigan

"We are preparing for a trial in the (state) Senate" and will move with "all due speed," Madigan said, although he added the inquiry could take weeks.

Blagojevich was silent about his plans, going to work again at his Chicago office and signing several bills despite demands that he resign — and not make a Senate appointment.

Through his lawyer, Blagojevich has denied doing anything wrong and shown no willingness to resign his $177,000 US-a-year post.

The governor, 52, is accused of conspiracy to commit fraud and solicitation of bribes, based on conversations recorded on court-approved wiretaps. REUTERS

Drugs most fowl

Traffickers hid 2.8 tons of cocaine in thousands of pounds of smelly bird droppings, Peruvian police said yesterday after uncovering the latest ruse to conceal drug shipments. "The organic products camouflaged the cocaine by neutralizing it to avoid detection," police said after a five-month investigation. REUTERS

Singapore attracts drug traffic

Despite severe penalties, heroin seizures almost triple: Report

Drug smugglers are increasingly using Singapore as a transit point to ship heroin to the United States and Europe, despite some of the world's strictest drug laws in the city-state, a newspaper reported early today.

Singapore's Straits Times newspaper said 46 kilogrammes of heroin were seized in the first nine months of the year, nearly three times the total for the whole of 2007, leading crime experts to suspect trafficking has increased.

The country's Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) believes that 11 kilogrammes of pure grade heroin seized in the yearlong haul was likely bound for the U.S. and Europe, the newspaper said

Anyone carrying more than 15 grammes of heroin faces a mandatory death sentence in Singapore, where a Malaysian man was sentenced to death last month for heroin trafficking.

But the newspaper said paradoxically smugglers were drawn to Singapore by its tough approach to drugs, as well as good international air connections.

More heroin is also flooding into Singapore because of bumper opium harvests last year in the Golden Triangle between Thailand, Laos and Myanmar, as well as in top producer Afghanistan, the newspaper said. REUTERS

Somalia **PM reinstated**

FEISAL OMAR/REUTERS

Somali boys carry portraits of Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein yesterday in the streets of the capital Mogadishu. Somalia's parliament voted yesterday to reinstate Hussein after he was sacked by the president, plunging the fragile government of the Horn of African nation into further disarray.

6 UN powers, Arabs to meet about Iran

The five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany will hold a rare meeting with Arab diplomats to discuss Iran's nuclear program, top diplomats from Britain and Russia said yesterday.

British Foreign Secretary David Miliband said the point of the meeting today is for the six powers, which have led negotiations on three rounds of UN sanctions against Iran for refusing to suspend its uranium enrichment program, to discuss the concerns of Arab states about Tehran's atomic ambitions.

"Iran's nuclear weapons program is increasingly recognized as a threat to the whole region of the Middle East," Miliband said after a meeting of the UN Security Council on Zimbabwe.

"The development of a nuclear weapons program that kick-starts a nuclear arms race is the last thing the Middle East needs," he told reporters.

Iran rejects Western allegations that it is secretly amassing the capability to build atomic weapons and refuses to suspend what it says is a civilian nuclear energy program. REUTERS

Reaching out

- Miliband said the six powers — Britain, the United States, France, China, Russia and Germany — want to reach out to Arab states and other countries to assure them that the Iranians are not victims of a "vendetta of the Security Council."
- The Arab countries invited to today's meeting are Iraq, Egypt, Jordan and most members of the Gulf Co-operation Council.

France promises aid to troubled auto industry

The French government said yesterday it was ready to act to save the automobile industry in return for commitment to preserving sites in France.

Automakers are struggling with orders stalling and financing difficult to come by, junior industry minister Luc Chatel told reporters after a government meeting with industry executives.

The government would be prepared to offer new forms of aid, such as loans or guarantees, which would have to be developed in conjunction with European partners and the European Commission, French President Nicolas Sarkozy told the industry chiefs.

But any measures would require strong commitment from French carmakers to a long-term future and business development in France.

"We are ready to do whatever is necessary to save our automobile sector," Chatel said.

REUTERS

"We are ready to do whatever is necessary."
Luc Chatel

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Comment & Views

Comment

Are we still a colony?

National**Report**

Lawrence Martin

It isn't over yet. The Harper government's unfathomable fumble — the fiscal update fiasco — has wreaked much havoc. But more is to come.

At the moment the prorogation of Parliament happened, it looked like the Governor General and the prime minister would get a pass. The country was awash in indignation over the prospect of the Bloc Québécois being part of a new coalition government. Stephen Harper, the prime minister who granted Quebec nation status, was nevertheless able to do a brilliant job of demonizing the Bloc and framing the debate around the separatist issue.

But now that the dust is settling, a settling of accounts could be in store.

Recall what happened. In a closed-door meeting, the Governor General, at the behest of the prime minister, shut down Parliament to save him from a confidence vote and the certain defeat of his government.

It's what's known as democracy Canadian-style. Writing from Paris in The Ottawa Citizen, Keith Spicer summed up the charade as "Zimbabwe Run By The Queen." Abroad, he said, Canada is being mocked as a colony. In the Globe and Mail, Peter C. Newman called it "our recent test run as a banana republic." On the CBC, Allan Gregg invoked the Robert Mugabe comparison.

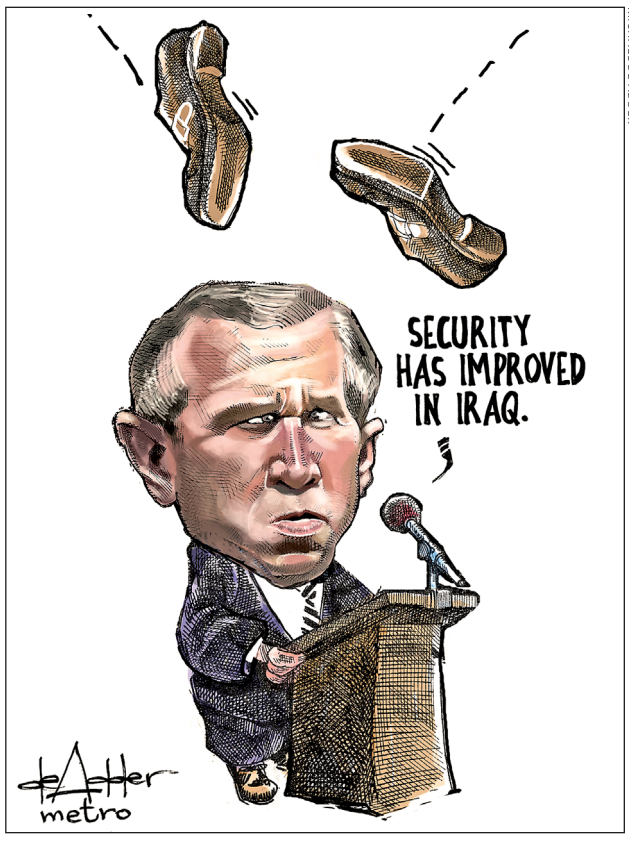
How could a decision as critical as this one be made by a Queen's representative with no public accountability whatsoever?

They and many others wonder something. How could a decision as critical as this one be made by a Queen's representative with no public accountability whatsoever? Who was in the room? What kind of pressure did Harper bring to bear? What about the suggestion that advisers for each side had basically agreed on the outcome before Harper even entered Rideau Hall that day?

As for Michaëlle Jean, she and her Monarchic ways are taking a hit. She may have made the right call on prorogation. But is she too regal to come forward and speak to her subjects about it? Are we not beyond century No. 17?

In short order, after the coming budget, she could well be making another decision of equal magnitude for the country. Her office shouldn't be allowed to treat us like a bunch of patsies bowing at the feet of her closed-door proclamations.

Lawrence Martin is a Globe and Mail correspondent and author who writes about national affairs from Ottawa.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

The deception behind indigenous cultural preservation

Frances Widdowson & Albert Howard

In current discussions about aboriginal policy, it is generally assumed that land claims and self-government are the best way to address native grievances and achieve social justice.

This policy direction, however, was not initiated by native people themselves; it has resulted from a long historical process, whereby non-aboriginal missionaries, consultants, lawyers and anthropologists have proposed initiatives that act to maintain Aboriginal marginalization. This "aboriginal industry" thrives on Aboriginal misery because native isolation from the mainstream ensures that a large segment of the aboriginal population will be perpetually in need of "help."

The processes advocated by the aboriginal industry maintain aboriginal isolation because it encourages people to look backwards to a romanticized past rather than focusing on the future.

Aboriginal traditions, in fact, are viable only in the context of hunting and gathering or horticulture — economic systems that are much smaller, less productive and simpler in organization than those found in modern states. If Aboriginal Peoples are to enjoy a high standard of living and the choice of participating in a variety of occupations, this cannot be facilitated by revitalizing customs associated with an earlier period of human history.

Developing a more comprehensive understanding of historical circumstances is necessary to effectively address aboriginal deprivation.

The reactionary character of these initiatives has not been recognized because aboriginal industry inspired research disguises the undeveloped nature of Aboriginal traditions; accusations of racism are then deployed to attack anyone who dares to question the deception that is being perpetrated. Developing an understanding of the actual results of indigenous cultural preservation cannot occur because intimidation and self-censorship are smothering debate.

Acknowledging the developmental difference between hunting and gathering and modern economies is also avoided because it is contrived as being demeaning to native people. The recognition that pre-contact aboriginal cultures lacked technologies such as iron, the wheel and a written language, and that this contributed to their eventual economic and political subordination, is seen as justifying the terrible harm that resulted from colonization. But identifying the factors that have enabled one group to oppress another does not justify the result. Instead, developing a more comprehensive understanding of historical circumstances is necessary to effectively address aboriginal deprivation.

In fact, the lack of candour in discussions about Aboriginal dependency precludes the development of a strategy to address it.

Instead of investigating how government programs can be designed to encourage Aboriginal Peoples' participation in the wider society, it is now maintained that they should cultivate their own "justice," "science," and "medicine" in isolation from modern requirements.

This bolsters the diversion of funds to the Aboriginal Industry and opportunistic native leaders, while the majority of the aboriginal population remains mired in poverty and despair.

Frances Widdowson is a faculty member in the department of policy studies at Mount Royal College, and Albert Howard is a teacher and writer. Both live in Calgary.

Letters

Reader disappointed with cut to arts and culture column

I was shocked to see Metro cut the weekly arts and culture column by Kim Mannix-Vermette. As an arts advocate and someone who works with various theatre companies in Ottawa, I had been following her column closely each week.

At a time when there is a potential stop to the funding of many arts, culture and heritage organizations in Ottawa it is sad to see they are taking another hit (via Metro).

As a paper that clearly views the arts as an important facet of the lifestyle in Ottawa, why cut the weekly arts section?

Please bring back the arts and culture section. Consider cutting celebrity gossip.

JESSICA RASHOTTE, OTTAWA

Invest money to create a Canadian auto industry

Why rescue the Big 3? Ford, General Motors and Chrysler are on the verge of bankruptcy.

If we are going to spend billions of dollars on the auto industry, it should be used to build our own auto manufacturing industry and use Canadian ingenuity to compete on the world stage.

As a Canadian taxpayer, I would prefer that my money be invested in starting a new, innovative auto industry rather than going to supporting jobs in the U.S.

ARCHIE MCLACHLAN, BRAMPTON, ONT.

Queen should not have been dragged into political arena

To say that I was appalled at Paul Sullivan's article (Dec. 10) on the absolution of the monarchy is an understatement.

First, Mr. Sullivan if you are to render the Queen without her title, her correct name would be Mrs. Mountbatten, not Windsor, as that was her maiden name.

Secondly, the Queen's role in a constitutional monarchy, which we are in Canada, is to "warn, encourage and to advise" and not dictate as your article purported.

Mr. Sullivan has drawn the monarch into a political arena where she does not belong. The sovereignty is above politics and acts as a safeguard in our system.

REGINA SILVA ROBINSON, TORONTO

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: ottawaletters@metronews.ca
Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number – street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

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Odwalla and vitaminwater going calorie-free
Coca-Cola is expected to launch a drink in the U.S. this week containing rebiana, a natural, calorie-free sweetener. Though it hasn't yet been approved, Coke is expected to put it into its Odwalla juices, vitaminwater and smartwater drinks. **REUTERS**

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

'Substantial correction' to hit condo market, economist says

A prominent Toronto housing economist is warning of a "substantial correction" in the city's overheated condominium market.

The warning comes on the heels of figures yesterday that show Canada's existing home sales continued to slide dramatically in the fourth quarter of the year, posting steep declines with the lowest level of monthly activity in almost eight years.

"This has been a very bumpy market and we are seeing the unwinding of some pretty strong price growth," said economist Will Dunning in an interview.

"This has been a very bumpy market and we are seeing the unwinding of some pretty strong price growth."
Economist Will Dunning

The impact will be felt particularly in the condominium market, said Dunning. By the end of September, the economist estimates there were a looming 33,919 condos under construction in the Toronto census metropolitan area.

"This very large pending inventory is setting the stage for a substantial correction," he said in a sobering report looking at the rental and condo market. Toronto condominium starts are normally in the 10,000 to 12,000 range annually, but a bottleneck in construction from record sales in prior years has a significant number of units still to be completed, according to the analyst.

Many of those units have been purchased by finicky investors who are quick to exit the market if they don't get the returns they expected. Analysts say some 30 per cent to 50 per cent of sales in some buildings have gone to investors, and some of them already seem set to exit the market.

As a result, the number of condos listed for sale in the central Toronto area is already up by a stunning 75 per cent in November compared to a year earlier, according to Dunning.

"It appears that this process — excess supply in the condo sector and owners acting to sell the units — may be underway already."

The large supply of condos will eventually have an impact on the apartment rental market, as "the housing that is now under construction will eventually become available for occupancy, and with the weaker economy, the supply will exceed the need," said Dunning.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Auto slump a boon for fuel cell-makers

METALS Ballard Power once depended on the health of the automotive sector but, having abandoned its focus on the hydrogen car, the fuel-cell pioneer is now unexpectedly benefiting from a global decline in vehicle sales.

It comes down to the remarkable rise and fall in the price of platinum.

The precious metal is used to make catalytic converters that control emissions from vehicle tailpipes, and it's a key ingredient in the production of fuel cells, which rely on platinum as a catalyst for chemical reactions.

Platinum typically represents eight per cent to 25 per cent of a fuel cell's cost depending on product size, Ballard CEO John Sheridan says. In an industry struggling to drive down the cost of its product, rising platinum prices were causing pain for most fuel-cell developers.

But a severe economic downturn and its impact on auto sales have brought platinum prices back to earth. Auto sales in the United States have fallen for 13 straight months — the longest slide in 17 years. This market contraction and the drop in demand for catalytic converters have created a surplus in platinum.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Platinum prices

- Platinum futures were about $1,000 US an ounce before skyrocketing to a record high of $2,308.80 in March 2008.

Business in brief

LEGAL Siemens AG and three of its subsidiaries will pay $800 million US to settle U.S. bribery probes, in what a U.S. Justice Department official called the furthest-reaching foreign corrupt-practices case the department had ever seen. A representative for the engineering company said he expects German regulators to announce a separate settlement.

FISHING Catches of Alaskan pollock, the lowly whitefish that make up fish sticks, fast-food fish sandwiches and imitation crab meat, will be capped at 815,000 metric tons next year, an 18.5 per cent cut from this year's limit, because of reduction in the stocks swimming in the Bering Sea, according to U.S. fishery managers. **REUTERS**

Forzani cuts spending, commissions

RETAIL Canada's largest sporting goods retailer, The Forzani Group Ltd., says its stores have never looked better now that employees are working on salary, instead of commission, and "a better customer experience" has replaced "the hard sell."

As worried consumers tighten their purse strings, the owner of Sport Chek, Athletes World, Nevada Bobs and other chains also said it plans to hoard its cash for the time being.

Forzani also said would spend less next year on capital improvements, in the $30-million range, down from the mid-$30 millions this year.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Mattel settles lead-toy scare for $12M

TOYS Mattel Inc. reached a $12-million US settlement with 39 U.S. states over lead-tainted toys that prompted a health scare in 2007, the Massachusetts attorney general said yesterday.

Last year, Mattel recalled more than 18 million toys made in China because of hazards related to magnets and lead paint.

No children were believed to have been injured by Mattel's lead toys and none of the Barbie, Dora the Explorer and Cars character toys in question, remain on the market, Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley told a news conference.

REUTERS

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Your Money

EDITOR: NINA DRAGICEVIC, NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

On bended knee ... with wallet open

SmartCookies

smartcookies.com

Resist the pressure from advertisers who imply that if you are not spending between one to three month's salary, you don't love your honey.

Believe it or not, December is the most popular time for wedding proposals. This month, men everywhere will talk to protective parents, kiss their single life goodbye and commit to thousands of dollars on an engagement ring.

So for all of you out there contemplating martial bliss, we know you have a lot of questions and are probably looking for some ways to keep your costs down. And trust us when we say skimping on the ring is not your best option.

Here are a few ways to help you stretch your dollar before you pop the question:

A Diamond is a Diamond, whether it's from Tiffany or Costco

The first step in choosing a diamond is having a clear understanding of the quality factors, commonly referred to as the "4Cs": Colour, clarity, cut and carat. Once you determine the combination that is right for you, we suggest you skip the brand-name. The only difference in a brand-name diamond is the label and the price tag — which can be up to 50 per cent more! And let's be honest, most of the women we know would rather have a bigger rock over a ritzy designer.

Ask for a Discount for Paying Cash

Depending on the profit margin, many jewellers will be willing to sell you your diamond at a lower price to avoid having to deal with fees from credit card companies.

Buying Rings as a Set Can Save Money

Often if you purchase your engagement ring and wedding ring as a set, you can save.

White Gold Looks like Platinum but Is Less Expensive

If you are looking for silver-tone jewelry but don't want to pay platinum prices, consider a ring made of white gold. Not only is white gold less expensive, but it is actually harder to scratch and damage.

Something to be Said for Sentiment

If either you or your partner has a family heirloom, antique jewelry from a loved one can be some of the most beautiful and sentimental. But if it isn't exactly what you had in mind, consider personalizing it by upgrading the diamond or band. You will still likely save money in the long run.

How Much Should You Really Spend?

Spend what you feel comfortable with. Resist the pressure from advertisers who imply that if you are not spending between one to three month's salary, you don't love your honey. Spend less, spend more, spend what YOU want. Just bear in mind this ring will be with you for a lifetime.

If you are looking for more money saving tips, contact us at smartcookies@metronews.ca. And check out our book, now available at bookstores everywhere: Smart Cookies Guide to Making More Dough.

Tune in Wednesday night at 9 p.m. EST/PST on the W Network and be sure to visit smartcookies.com for more tips.

Investing

Allan Small

The week's column poses the question: Should you borrow to invest now? Visit metronews.ca

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Dickens: Financial adviser?

MoneyMatters

Henry Choo Chong

choochonghcga@yahoo.ca

Q Last month, our company went to a four-day work week. My wife continues to work but we depend on both incomes to meet our everyday expenses. At this rate, we could run into some problems sooner than later. Would a financial advisor help with our concerns? Sondeep and Miriam

A Having a good financial advisor on your side is always good, particularly in these economic times. Set a time to see one. Finally, our leaders have acknowledged what most Canadians already knew — the "R" word is here. Businesses continue to lose jobs, banks have tightened credit and the average person is hurting.

Although some Canadians are currently suffering more than others, we should all be diligent going forward. Don't be Scrooge but instead learn from Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. The irony is that Dickens' initial inspiration to write this classic was his need to get out of debt.

Some of these holiday cheers may get you into a festive spirit:

Christmas Past

Some things, once broken, cannot be mended. Fortunately, credit and relationships are not one of them. Pull your credit and review carefully. Have the credit bureau correct any errors and negotiate to pay off any judgements. Send a card, e-mail, or phone call to past co-workers, employers and friends. The past can haunt you for a long time.

Christmas Present

Plan now for the future. Create a household budget and stick to it. Don't forget to pay yourself. Be creative with gifts. A unique gift maybe more appreciated than an expensive present. Pay all your bills on time. Payments should not mimic the stock market.

Christmas Yet to Come

The steps you take now will have a direct impact on your financial future. Don't forget George Orwell's famous quote: "Who controls the past, controls the future: Who controls the present controls the past."

Count your blessings (they are sitting at your dinner table), and continue to give to those that are more in need.

Henry Choo Chong, CGA, provides professional accounting and taxation solutions: choochonghcga@yahoo.ca.

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Hockey player in critical condition after fight

A Whitby Dunlops hockey player suffered a severe head injury Friday when his helmet came off and he fell to the ice during a fight. Don Sanderson, a 21-year-old York University student, remains in a coma at a Hamilton hospital, according to the team's website. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

"I think race was the No. 1 factor ... Out of all the coaches they interviewed, Chizik probably had the worst resume."

Former NBA star Charles Barkley to ESPN on his alma mater, Auburn, hiring Gene Chizik as head football coach. Barkley said University of Buffalo coach and former CFL player Turner Gill, who is black, was more qualified. SOURCE: ESPN.COM

SPORTS@METRONEWS.CA

Carter shines in Toronto again

NBA RESULT

Nets 94 **Raptors** 87

VS

Devin Harris scored 20 points and Vince Carter joined him with that total, as New Jersey stormed back in the final period to down Toronto, 94-87, at the Air Canada Centre last night.

Carter scored just three points and didn't hit a shot in just over 29 minutes on Dec. 12 against the Raptors, resulting in a 101-79 defeat. That game occurred in New Jersey, where the Nets are just 4-7 this season.

In Toronto however, the Raptors choked down the stretch as the Nets rode a 16-0 tidal wave that turned a nine-point deficit into a seven-point advantage.

Harris tallied the first nine points with his free throws tying the game at 72. Carter's three-point play and a pair of Harris free throws pushed the lead to 79-72.

Chris Bosh and Jason Kapono donated 17 points apiece and Jose Calderon collected 15 points to go along with eight assists. Jermaine O'Neal netted 14 points in defeat, the club's second consecutive setback. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Quinn goes with a new equation

One more blue-liner, one less forward, but fourth time a charm for Esposito

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

Team Canada's roster is set for a run at a fifth straight gold medal at the world junior hockey championship.

Head coach Pat Quinn and chief scout Al Murray unveiled their 22-man squad yesterday in Ottawa, and sent 16 players packing following a three-day selection camp.

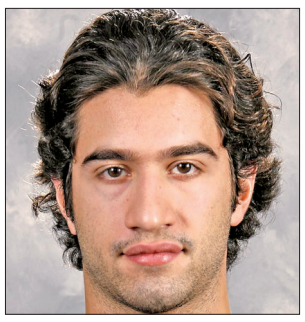
The roster follows an untraditional format, with 12 forwards and eight defenceman instead of the usual 13-7 breakdown. This was to accommodate 17-year-old power-play specialist Ryan Ellis, who is not ready for regular ice if injuries hit.

The team will be led offensively by returnees John Tavares and Zach Boychuk along with Vancouver Canucks first-rounder Cody Hodgson and relative unknown Jamie Benn.

Tavares, an Oakville, Ont., is a big-name talent, a highly-touted prospect for next June's NHL draft.

He just turned 18, but already has 182 goals and 381 points in 222 games with the Ontario Hockey League's Oshawa Generals.

Returnees Thomas Hickey, the team's captain, and Montreal Canadiens draftee P.K. Subban anchor the defence corps along with NHL first-rounders Tyler Myers (Buffalo), Alex Pietrangelo (St. Louis) and Colten Teubert (L.A.).



Angelo Esposito was chosen on his fourth try.

In goal are Chet Pickard, a Nashville Predators first-rounder, and Memorial Cup MVP Dustin Tokarski.

Also of note, Montreal Junior forward Angelo Esposito made the roster after being cut three straight times.

The team's average age is 18.5, with one 17-year-old, eight 18-year-olds and 13 19-year-olds.

Notable cuts were hotshot 17-year-old Taylor Hall of the Windsor Spitfires and high-scoring Evander Kane.

The tournament starts Boxing Day at Scotiabank Place.

2009 juniors

Goalies

- Chet Pickard, Dustin Tokarski

Defencemen

- Keith Aulie, Ryan Ellis, Cody Goloubef, Thomas Hickey, Tyler Myers, Alex Pietrangelo, P.K. Subban, Colten Teubert.

Forwards

- Jamie Benn, Zach Boychuk, Patrice Cormier, Stefan Della Rovere, Chris DiDomenico, Jordan Eberle, Tyler Ennis, Angelo Esposito, Cody Hodgson, Brett Sonne, John Tavares, Dana Tyrell.

Kessel enjoying the ride after tougher times

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

Before Phil Kessel could earn a passing grade in the National Hockey League, he had to learn not to cheat.

The 21-year-old, suddenly one of the league's hottest scorers, attributes his success to improved two-way play under Boston head coach Claude Julien — in particular, not vacating the defensive zone early to cherry-pick scoring chances. It's that type of "cheating" that had Kessel in the press box as a healthy scratch in the playoffs last spring. "He (Julien) instilled that you have to play good two-way hockey to get offensive chances," he said.

"Our whole team is playing good two-way hockey. It's creating good chances in the offensive end, starting in the defensive end."

The Bruins, who have been a .500-or-less team for the past five seasons, are one of the first-half surprises in the NHL, atop the Eastern Conference with a 21-5-4 record. Kessel has already tied his career high of 19 goals in just 30 games. He is riding an NHL-best 15-game points streak and is the NHL's first star of the week. These days, Julien wouldn't even think of scratching the third-year winger.

The Bruins' Phil Kessel was named NHL first star of the week.

Kessel credits his success to linemates Marc Savard and Milan Lucic. Savard provides uncanny playmaking savvy, Lucic brings the brawn, and Kessel the sniper's touch. Together, they have 36 goals and 85 points in 30 games.

"We have a great bunch of guys," Kessel said. "We're winning, and when we show up to the rink, we're having fun."

Kessel, drafted fifth overall in 2006, has been through a lot in his young career. He was diagnosed with testicular cancer halfway through his NHL rookie campaign, but was pronounced cancer-free a week later after surgery.

He won the Bill Masterton Trophy for his dedication to hockey and has no lingering issues, only requiring a checkup every couple of months.

Sports in brief

NHL Buffalo Sabres defenceman Craig Rivet will be sidelined at least two weeks with a shoulder injury that has caused him to miss the previous two games. Sabres head coach Lindy Ruff said it was not a day-to-day injury and that Rivet would be re-evaluated in two weeks.

NFL Tampa Bay Buccaneers defensive co-ordinator Monte Kiffin will leave the NFL to join his son at the University of Tennessee. Lane Kiffin was introduced as Tennessee's new head football coach on Dec. 1 and will have his father's help in rounding out the coaching staff. "I think we all respect his situation, we have tremendous respect for him. We had a pretty good indication that he was going to join his son," Bucs head coach Jon Gruden said.

NFL Longtime Kansas City Chiefs executive Carl Peterson will step down as president, general manager and CEO at the end of the season, the team announced yesterday. Peterson joined the Chiefs in 1989. METRO NEWS SERVICES

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Colorado 3 Detroit 2
San Jose at Los Angeles

TONIGHT'S GAMES
Atlanta at **OTTAWA**
New Jersey at Toronto
Washington at N.Y. Islanders
Colorado at Philadelphia
Montreal at Carolina
Calgary at St. Louis
Phoenix at Dallas
Chicago at Edmonton
N.Y. Rangers at Anaheim

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
New Jersey 94 Toronto 87
Atlanta 83 Charlotte 79
Indiana 118 Washington 98
Boston 100 Utah 91
Milwaukee 98 Miami 83
Denver at Dallas
New York at Phoenix
Minnesota at Sacramento
Orlando at Golden State

TONIGHT'S GAMES
Chicago at Charlotte
New Orleans at Memphis
L.A. Clippers at Oklahoma City
Denver at Houston
Sacramento at Portland
New York at L.A. Lakers

NFL

YESTERDAY'S RESULT
Cleveland at Philadelphia

WEEK 16
THURSDAY'S GAME
Indianapolis at Jacksonville

SATURDAY'S GAME
Baltimore at Dallas

SUNDAY'S GAMES
New Orleans at Detroit
Pittsburgh at Tennessee
Miami at Kansas City
Arizona at New England
San Francisco at St. Louis
San Diego at Tampa Bay
Cincinnati at Cleveland
N.Y. Jets at Seattle
Houston at Oakland
Buffalo at Denver
Atlanta at Minnesota
Philadelphia at Washington
Carolina at N.Y. Giants

MONDAY, DEC. 22 GAME
Green Bay at Chicago

Reward dry, tired fingers
If you or someone on your Christmas list could use some healing power that lingers, try J.R. Watkitins Cuticle Salve, $4.79 to $8.99. Perfect for gardeners, this all-natural salve comes in three fanciful flavours: Vanilla and lemon cream, aloe & green tea and mango. Available at watkinsonline.com. METRO

Health & Beauty

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE COLACINO, ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

The season of hookups

The J Spot

Josey Vogels

Sex talk with Josey

Can your holiday hookup stand the test of time? Take this quiz to find out!

Seems presents aren't the only things people are shopping for in the holiday rush. According to a recent study from speed dating service FastLife.ca, hookups peak in the period leading up to the holidays.

In the last three years, FastLife noticed that speed-dating match rates hover around 82 per cent on average from January to October, but by the end of November match rates rise to 95 to 100 per cent where they remain until the new year.

I realize it's in their interest to encourage hookups, but it makes sense. With all the parties and family get-togethers at this time of year, we all want someone to smooch under the mistletoe with or get a misguided gift from.

And, as Gabriela Asenjo, FastLife's events manager, says, "People let their guard down more easily and are less picky at pre-Christmas events."

But, while it may be easy as shooting fish in a barrel to hook up with someone who will (theoretically, at least) help ease that lonesome feeling through the holidays, actually surviving the holidays together might prove to be a little more challenging.

Take this quiz to see if your relationship will make it:

1. You bring your date to your office party:

a) You can't have fun because you've constantly got your eye on your date fearing he's telling your colleagues about how the CIA covered up his alien abduction.

b) Your colleagues go on and on the next day about what a catch your date is.

c) At the end of the night, you find your date under your desk making out with your boss.

2. Your date's idea of a great Christmas gift is:

a) His and hers matching door-stoppers.

b) A romantic weekend away and a tasteful nude self-portrait.

c) Waiting until after Christmas "when everything's on sale" to get your gift.

3. One of you isn't Christian, how do you celebrate the holidays?

a) Say you'd be happy to celebrate Christmas, if afterward, your honey agrees to a week-long Bhuddist retreat where you chant for eight hours a day.

b) Light the menorah and spin the dreidel before exchanging gifts under the Christmas tree.

c) Tell your date to deal, you're not about to let a little thing like someone's religion spoil your holiday.

4. Your mom gives your date a really ugly sweater as a gift, you:

a) Force your sweetie to wear it and then giggle maniacally.

b) Wear it to bed with him…with nothing on underneath.

c) Come across it later in a bucket full of rags your date uses to clean the floor.

5. An ex gives your date an expensive present:

a) Tell the ex you bought your date the same thing but took it back because you thought it was tacky.

b) Call up the ex to say thank you for the gift, and send an invite for dinner.

c) "Accidentally" trip over it and break it.

If you answered mostly a's, put on your helmets, hide all sharp objects and you might make it.

If you answered mostly b's, dust off your copy of It's a Wonderful Life and warm up some rum and cider. You guys will make everyone sick with your holiday bliss.

If you answered mostly c's, there's still time to end things before you blow a wad of cash on him or her.

Happy holidays and good luck!

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.

Women don't stress over sex

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

SEXUALITY Women seem to take sexual difficulties in stride. That is the conclusion of a survey of 31,000 U.S. women. Almost half of women reported they suffered from problems with desire, arousal or orgasm. But only 12 per cent of women are worried, frustrated or embarrassed by a sexual problem.

Distressing sexual problems were most common in women between the ages of 45 and 64. Women younger than 45 or older than 64 may have difficulties, but they are not as worried about them. The researchers' main conclusion was that sexual problems are quite common in women, and that those who are distressed by them should seek medical help.

Only 12 per cent of women are worried or embarrassed by a sexual problem, a recent survey suggest.

Results of the study were published in the November 2008 issue of Obstetrics & Gynecology.

In brief

HAIR'S STEM CELLS
The abundant supply of stem cells that are in the hair bulb may one day be harnessed for a wide range of regenerative treatments, from wound healing to nerve repair.
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FOND FAREWELLS!

It is with a mixture of joy and sadness that we say farewell to our friend and colleague, Dr. Zvi Gellert. Dr. Gellert will be retiring from practicing dentistry with the Rideau Dental Centre at the end of December 2008. While we are excited for him as he embarks on a new phase in life, we also know that he will be missed.

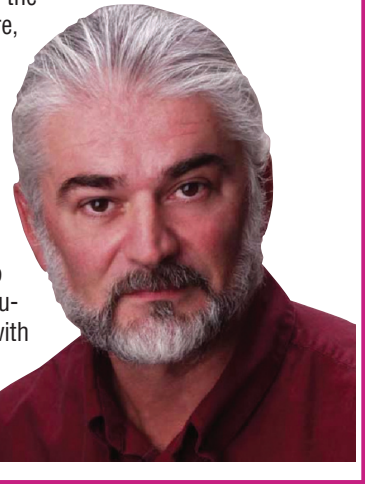
Dr. Gellert was one of the original partners of the Rideau Dental Centre. He was among the first in Ottawa to recognize that dentistry needed to be provided at greater convenience to patients. This meant accessible locations and convenient hours. With this philosophy in mind, Dr. Gellert dedicated himself to providing his patients with the highest standards of oral health care when and where they needed it.

These standards motivated Dr. Gellert throughout his career. He always approached the practice of dentistry with the patient's best interests in mind. As we continued to evolve and new dentists and staff joined our family, Dr. Gellert was instrumental in ensuring that they were instilled with the same principles. Therefore, Dr. Gellert takes great comfort in knowing the dentists and hygiene staff that continue to serve his patients will also provide the best oral health care possible.

We are pleased to have had the opportunity to work so closely with Dr. Gellert. And it is with fond memories of those years together that we wish him the best as he moves on to new adventures.

Dr. Gellert, we, the partners and staff of Rideau Dental Centre, would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for the privilege of having worked with you. We will miss your professionalism and your friendship! Best of luck!

Dr. Zvi Gellert



Dark Knight makes AFI list

Batman film The Dark Knight has been named as one of the Top 10 movies of 2008 by the American Film Institute. Others include political biopic Milk, animated fantasy Wall-E and Brad Pitt's The Curious Case of Benjamin Button. **BBC NEWS ONLINE**

Entertainment

Nobel Man

Bono has been awarded the annual Nobel Man of Peace prize for his efforts to combat poverty, debt and disease in Africa. The U2 frontman was honoured at a ceremony in Paris.

FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

EDITOR: TINA COSTANZA, TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA

Pie producer joins Twilight sequel

MOVIES Chris Weitz will direct New Moon, the sequel to the smash vampire romance Twilight, after that film's director Catherine Hardwicke failed to reach a deal with producer Summit Entertainment.

The hiring of Weitz, whose credits include About A Boy and The Golden Compass, prompted a carefully calibrated campaign of reassurance on the part of creators.

Slumdog, Happy top Satellite picks

MOVIES Slumdog Millionaire was named best motion picture drama and Happy-Go-Lucky best motion picture comedy or musical at the 13th annual Satellite Awards.

The awards, voted by the International Press Academy also chose Slumdog's Danny Boyle as best director. Sally Hawkins, the star of Happy-Go-Lucky, was hailed as best actress in a comedy or musical. Ricky Gervais (Ghost Town) won for best actor in the category.

Earth film stands tall overseas

MOVIES The Day the Earth Stood Still took command of the overseas market during the weekend, selling $39 million US worth of tickets in 90 countries.

Fox said it is projecting No. 1 market shares for the day-and-date release in 53 of the 90 markets.

Russia, with $5.6 million, was Earth's biggest No. 1 supporter, followed by the U.K. ($4.1 million) and Spain ($2.9 million).

American Idol to change its tune

TV Fox is readying to announce some American Idol format changes.

The changes include: Fewer audition episodes and more Hollywood-round episodes; the semifinalist rounds will feature the top 36 contestants instead of 24; the wild card round will return, which gives eliminated contestants a chance to come back; Fox will not air the Idol Gives Back charity event. **REUTERS**

Read this week's DVD reviews online at metronews.ca/entertainment

Brandy has Human touch

R&B singer gets up front and personal on her latest album

ROB MCMAHON
for Metro Canada

Brandy's new album Human tackles the subject of celebrity head on.

Speaking the day before the album's release, Brandy (full name Brandy Norwood) said the project reflects a desire to be more up-front and personal — a tough choice in today's pop culture.

"It seems like everything's perfect (with celebrities), but it's not, (and) emotionally we're all the same," said the singer, who released her first album as a teenager. "I've been able to achieve all my dreams, and I love having achieved so much at a young age. But I realize there's quite a lot going on in the public eye … people can make judgments."

This statement is particularly true given the degree to which celebrities' private lives are captured and broadcast. Along with the usual suspects, Brandy too felt the sting of public perception after she revealed she wasn't actually married to the father of her daughter Sy'rai, Robert Smith. She felt like the story would come out eventually, and so decided to approach it head-on, on the cusp of an album release.

"(Back then) I was feeling like I had to be dishonest about the situation," said Brandy. "Being a role model, people look up to you, and you don't want to disappoint them … (and you're) under so much pressure.

"I wanted to tell the truth and say that honestly won't happen again."

"I'm trying to describe what's it's like to be a human being, since that's what we all are at the end of day."
Brandy

This strategy to directly confront personal stories extends to Brandy's new album. A group effort, with Brandy collaborating with several writers and producers, the songs focus on relationships, as heard on tracks like Long Distance and album closer Fall, a duet co-written with British pop singer Natasha Bedingfield.

"Natasha is the sweetest person — her energy and vibe is amazing," said Brandy. "Fall is about not being afraid to be in love, even if you're scared. We had so much fun recording the song. We were like little kids in the studio, having fun but still working hard."

That image — of a couple of friends cavorting in the studio — is a tough one to conjure at first, given Brandy's multimillion-selling records, award wins, acting credits and pitch-perfect persona. But that's the image she hopes to express with Human: That like all celebrities, she's a regular person.

"Human is just about being you — being who and what you are," she said. "I'm trying to describe what's it's like to be a human being, since that's what we all are at the end of day."

SONY BMG PHOTO

Human, the latest album from R&B singer Brandy, is now in stores.

Madonna settles divorce for up to $92 million US

Madonna has paid her ex-husband British director Guy Ritchie up to 60 million pounds ($92 million US) to settle their divorce after eight years of marriage, her spokeswoman said yesterday.

Liz Rosenberg said the singer, 50, had given Ritchie, 40, between 50 and 60 million pounds ($76 million and $92 million) as part of their divorce, which was granted by a British court on Nov. 21.

She said that sum includes the couple's English country estate, Ashcombe, which is valued at about 20 million pounds ($30 million).

The couple's combined wealth has been estimated at about $525 million, but Madonna accounts for most of it.

Rosenberg said custody arrangements for the couple's children have not been finalized.

Madonna and Ritchie have an 8-year-old son, Rocco, and 3-year-old son David, adopted from Malawi.The singer also has a daughter Lourdes, born in 1996, from her relationship with fitness trainer Carlos Leon.

Madonna, one of the most successful singers of all time with estimated album sales of more than 200 million, was married once before, to actor Sean Penn, in the 1980s.

Madonna and Ritchie announced their split in October, nearly eight years after their fairytale wedding at Skibo Castle in Scotland.

Ritchie is a British film director who is making Hollywood blockbuster Sherlock Holmes starring Robert Downey Jr. as the Victorian-era super sleuth. **REUTERS**

Theatre will not be named after Ledger
The decision to name a new performing arts centre in Perth, Australia, after late actor Heath Ledger has been overturned in favour of a more diverse title. The venue will now be called the State Theatre Centre of Western Australia. IMDB.COM

Carlyle to helm Stargate Universe

TELEVISION Scottish actor Robert Carlyle, best known for his roles in Trainspotting and The Full Monty, will play the lead role in Sci Fi Channel's new series Stargate Universe.

The third installment in the cable channel's Stargate franchise is targeted to launch in the summer with a two-hour premiere.

Robert Carlyle

Described as edgier, darker and younger-skewing than its predecessors, Stargate SG-1 and Stargate Atlantis, Stargate Universe follows a group of soldiers, scientists and civilians left to fend for themselves when forced through a Stargate after their hidden base comes under attack. The survivors, who emerge aboard an ancient ship missing in the far reaches of space, are led by Dr. David Rush (Carlyle), who works to unlock the ship's mysteries and return the group home but also might have ulterior motives.

The network had said it was looking to cast a well-known actor as Rush, and fresh faces to play the rest of the ship's crew. Carlyle recently starred opposite Kiefer Sutherland in Fox's TV movie 24: Redemption.

Filmmakers spy Mossad thriller

MOVIES A pair of screenwriters are pulling back the curtain on the Mossad, writing an untitled project involving the Israeli intelligence agency.

The film will follow the true story of the disappearance of a nine-year-old boy from the streets of Jerusalem in the early 1960s.

The script comes from Guy Nattiv and Erez Tadmor, who may also direct. REUTERS

GlobalStyle

Monica Cruz on Mango exclusively at metronews.ca/globalstyle

See complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and purchase tickets at metronews.ca/movies

TV's troubles in viewer-friendly times

IntelleVision

rick.mcginnis@metronews.ca

HELP FOR THE HOPELESS: Network TV has finally shown signs of admitting it's in trouble, and there's no shortage of helpful bystanders willing to offer their opinions on how it can get up off the ground —including yours truly.

Just after NBC announced last week that they'd be turning over the weeknight 10 p.m. slot to Jay Leno, the New York Times business section ran a little analysis of what the news meant — at least if you'd ever spent time sitting in an executive suite in Hollywood or New York.

"The whole nature of TV has become a lot more viewer-friendly," Robert C. Wright, a former chairman of NBC Universal, told the Times. "There are more opportunities than ever before for people to watch a program that they're interested in."

"There's no way to schedule around DVR viewing," said Dawn Ostroff, CW's president of entertainment. "You have to assume that a good number of viewers are going to wind up watching the content in a different way."

"It's time for the networks to acknowledge — and celebrate, and exploit — the fact that we all know about just how fake reality shows are."
Boston Globe TV critic Matthew Gilbert

The 10 p.m. slot, the home to superannuated procedurals and mediocre news magazines for too long, has become the Siberia of primetime, and a no-go zone for younger viewers, though how Leno's new show is going to bring them back remains to be seen.

In the Boston Globe, TV critic Matthew Gilbert published nine suggestions for how the networks could compete with cable and become relevant again, including more finite runs on series to prevent staleness, more incentive for marquee comedians like Will Ferrell to shift from movies back to TV, perhaps with a show based on current affairs, fewer awards shows, commercials, and irritating onscreen graphics, and a comedy series based on reality television.

The last one is a great idea, and it frankly boggles the mind why no one has tried it yet. As Gilbert points out, "It's time for the networks to acknowledge — and celebrate, and exploit — the fact that we all know about just how fake reality shows are."

Amen to that, brother.

Gilbert also wishes the networks would curb their enthusiasm for procedurals, but considering that they remain popular — as he himself points out, CBS's The Mentalist is one of the few real hits this season — and a favorite of the demographically-derided but cash-rich older viewer, I can't imagine he'll get his wish.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

OT	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/16/08 primetime	265	353	2	TVO	Blue Realm "Tentacles"		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		The Street "Bold Street: Stan"		The Choir (Part 2 of 4)		Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	House (HDTV PA)		(9:01) NCIS (N)		Kitchen Nightmares (N)		News (N)
	-	-	5	SRC	Antarctique	*Madagascar* ★★★ (2005, Comédie) (SC)			Les Bougon français (N) (SC)		Le Téléjournal (N) (SC)		La Zone
	209	342	6	CHRO	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Fringe "The Arrival"		The Mentalist (HDTV) (N)		Eli Stone (HDTV) (N)		News (N)
	196	311	7	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	Law & Order "Zero"		Criminal Minds		(10:01) Without a Trace (N)		News (N)
	208	303	8	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	*The Santa Clause 2* ★★ (2002, Comedy) Tim Allen.				CBC News: The National		The Hour
	-	360	9	NBC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	The Biggest Loser: Families (Season Finale) (N)				Momma's Boys (N)		News (N)
	117	713	10	TVA	Les Anges de la rénovation		Monk (SC)		Musicographie René Angelil.		TVA 22 heures	Elvis vu par les Presley	
	-	-	11	QS	*Magie blanche* ★★ (2005, Drame) Mary Tyler Moore.				Pushing Daisies (SC)		Cent dix pour cent (SC)		Msr Showbiz
	137	763	12	TFO	Panorama		Canada	Villages	*Week-end* ★★★ (1967, Com. dramatique) Mireille Darc.				Le Temps
	-	362	13	CBS	Dr. Phil (HDTV)		NCIS "Silent Night" (N)		The Mentalist (HDTV) (N)		(10:01) Without a Trace (N)		Two/Half Men
	216	395	14	OMN2	Cold Case "8 Years"		News (N)		News (N)		Two/Half Men	King	Cold Case
	214	344	15	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Privileged (HDTV)		According-Jim	According-Jim	Hates Chris	Friends	News (N)
	115	343	16	CFMT	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News (N)		Vivere Il	News (N)	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
	218	345	18	E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	The Biggest Loser: Families (Season Finale) (N)				Momma's Boys (N)		News (N)
	-	361	20	ABC	News (N)	Entertainment	A Charlie Brown Christmas		According-Jim	According-Jim	Eli Stone (HDTV) (N)		News (N)
	512	396	24	CPAC	La Période de questions		Heure polit.	L'Heure politique				Revue	Période-quest.
	651	355	25	CTS	Happy Days	Laverne	Michael Coren Show		100 Huntley Street		Life Today	This Is Day	John Hagee
	-	365	36	FOX	TMZ (N)	Seinfeld	House (HDTV PA)		(9:01) Fringe (HDTV)		News (N)		News
	-	-	64	PBS	Business Rpt.	Whiz Quiz	Nova (HDTV) (DVS)		Independent Lens (HDTV) (N)			Christmas	Tavis Smiley
	205	312	104	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	Law & Order "Zero"		Criminal Minds		(10:01) Without a Trace (N)		News (N)
news	502	390	26	NW	CBC News	Newman	The Hour		CBC News: The National		Wal-Mart Nation		National
	500	500	33	CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown: No Bias		Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
sports	406	417	27	net	Overtime	NHL Hockey Atlanta Thrashers at Ottawa Senators. (HDTV) (Live)					Sportsnet Connected		Hockey Central
	126	730	28	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	400	280	30	TSN	NHL Hockey New Jersey Devils at Toronto Maple Leafs. (HDTV) (Live)					NHL Hockey Chicago Blackhawks at Edmonton Oilers.			
	410	403	52	SCR	Cabby Unlimit	Court Surfing NBA news, scores and highlights.					Score Tonight		Hockey Talk
	411	457	56	OLN	Ed's Up	Videos	Survivorman		Angry Planet	Word Travels	Which Way to...		Pilot Guides
	417	406	59	SC	Pinks	Pass Time	Low Life	Low Life	Super Bikes!	Super Bikes!	Hot Import	Hot Import	Pinks
family	554	544	48	TEL	Santa Claus	Bugs Bunny & Tweety Show		Wayside	Johnny Test	Futurama	American Dad	Robot Chicken	Rick & Steve
	557	540	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	That's-Raven	Zack & Cody	Natural-Sadie	Han. Montana	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
	551	542	65	YTV	OddParents	Rocko's Life	Mon. Warriors	Sabrina-Witch	Futurama	Prank Patrol	Mystery Hnt.	Adrenaline Proj	Mystery Hnt.
cable variety	570	580	29	MM	mmmtop	Where You At	Popaganda		Listed		Celebrity Wrestling		Tommy Lee
	615	520	31	A&E	Cold Case Files		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		Manhunters: Fugitive		Jacked: Theft
	628	584	32	SPKE	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		UFC Unleashed		UFC Unleashed		MANswers
	521	560	34	TLC	My Skin Could Kill Me		My Shocking Story (N)		Mystery Diagnosis		Dr. G: Medical Examiner		Shocking Story
	145	761	35	TV5	Toute une histoire		Voici venir l'orage "Du cinéma à Paris"			Chateaux	Champ. nature	Humanima	Journal TV5
	616	521	39	SHO	About a Girl	About a Girl	The Best Years (DVS)		Testees	Trailer Park	House "Act Your Age"		House
	620	523	40	BVO	Desperate Housewives		Live at the Rehearsal Hall		One Night With Barry Manilow			Bravo!Videos	Law & Order
	520	505	42	DIS	Daily Planet (N)		How It's Made	How It's Made	Destroyed	Destroyed	Dirty Jobs		Daily Planet
	575	583	43	CMT	Canada Countdown		*The Sons of Mistletoe* (2001, Drama) Roma Downey.				Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Cheerleaders
	601	562	45	SLC	Til Debt-Part	Rich Poor	Date My Ex: Jo & Slade		Rich Bride, Poor Bride		End of Leash	End of Leash	ET Canada
	625	548	46	COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	S. Silverman	Flt.-Conchords	Daily Show
	294	529	47	TBS	House-Payne	House-Payne	*Land of the Dead* ★★ (2005, Horror) Simon Baker.				Steve Harvey	Seinfeld	Family Guy
	600	564	49	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Pure Design	Style	Sarah's House	Design Inc.	Colin & Justin's Home Heist		Holmes-Homes
	627	528	50	SPC	Lost		Star Trek: Next Gener.		Ultimate Super Heroes-Villains		Rabbit Fall (N)	The Circuit	Stargate SG-1
	581	566	53	MTV	Busted	After	MTV News	Cribs	A Double Shot of Love		A Double Shot of Love		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	Beverly Hills, 90210		Planet Soap	What Happen?	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	King	Family Guy
	522	506	55	HIS	NCIS "Frame-Up"		Outlaw Bikers		Ax Men		NCIS "Frame-Up"		Crime Stories
	129	773	60	CD	Biographies		Mayday "Approche finale"		Images-chocs		Un tueur si proche (HDTV)		Docu-D
	261	394	61	V	Murder, She Wrote		Bless-Father	On the Buses	*The Christmas Shoes* (2002, Drama) Rob Lowe.				Celtic Angels
	602	567	62	W	Friends	Will & Grace	Maxed Out	Grocery Bag	*Holiday Wishes* (2006, Drama) Amber Benson.				Grocery Bag
	269	350	70	APTN	Wings-Canada	Great Towns	Wapos Bay (N)	Rez Rides	Fish Out of	Mixed Blessing	First Nation	Rabbit Fall	Moccasin Flats
	621	527	71	TLK	Look-A-Like	etalk Profile	TMZ (N)	etalk	Fabulous Life	Off the Leash	The Tonight Show-Jay Leno		TMZ
	603	561	95	FN	The Main	Chef at Home	Restaurant Makeover		The F Word		Chef School	At the Table	Restaurant

critics'corner

Holiday Wishes
After three versions of "Freaky Friday" and about a gajillion different retellings of "The Prince and the Pauper," do we really need another one? Someone thinks so, hence this syrup-fest about a spoiled rich girl and an orphan who switch bodies, just in time to give and receive some lessons in the True Meaning of Christmas. 9 PM on 62 W

NCIS
Gibbs and the rest of the team are forced to put in overtime while searching for a suspect on a case over Christmas. The real problem arises when they discover their prime suspect has been dead for 17 years. Talk about your "Silent Nights." 8 PM on 13 CBS; 9:01 PM on 3 GTV

One Night With Barry Manilow
Recorded for the BBC in 2004, this 90-minute special features the singer-songwriter performing in an intimate setting. His rendition of "Can't Smile Without You" is especially memorable. The special also includes footage of Manilow's 1975 appearance on the British show "The Midnight Special". 9 PM on 40 BVO

Wedding bells for Hendricks
Christina Hendricks, who plays the bombshell head secretary on the Emmy-winning Mad Men, is engaged to actor Geoffrey Arend. No wedding date has been set. **PEOPLE.COM**

Celebrity Buzz

The Britney and Madonna tour?

RUMOUR Britney Spears is planning to unveil pop star Madonna as a surprise guest when she kicks off her comeback tour next year, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

Spears joined Madonna onstage in Los Angeles last month during the U.S. leg of her Sticky & Sweet tour, and Spears wants Madonna to return the favour when she hits the road in New Orleans, La., in March.

"I'm choreographing and set-designing her show," Spears' choreographer Wade Robson reveals. "There's been talk of Madonna making an appearance, and there's so many places we could take that. At this point the main issue is timing."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Fame carries trade-offs: Will

FAME Actor Will Smith is happy to sign autographs for fans, because it means he can leap to the front of the queue in posh restaurants, imdb.com reports.

Smith insists he never moans about the constant attention he receives from paparazzi or movie-goers as it is the price he pays for fame. And he is adamant that by always agreeing to give fans his signature, he earns the right to be treated like a star.

"By being famous, you're afforded rights that other people who aren't famous aren't afforded. If I'm going to walk to the front of the line (at the restaurant) because I'm Will Smith, then I have to sign all the autographs," Smith tells USA Today newspaper.

"If I don't want to sign any autographs, I don't walk to the front of the line. It's that simple. Stand in the line with everybody else." **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Moss cancels bash on partner's orders

RELATIONSHIP Kate Moss has cancelled her proposed New Year's Eve party on the orders of her boyfriend, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The supermodel was planning to attend a star-studded bash in St. Tropez, in the South of France, but her Kills guitarist partner Jamie Hince has insisted she spend the day at home with him and her six-year-old daughter Lila Grace, from a previous relationship.

The couple will see in 2009 at her Oxfordshire home, in the United Kingdom.

"They're back together, but they are still arguing about how much Kate goes out," a source says. "Jamie says Kate needs to calm her lifestyle down, but she still likes to party. She loves him but she hates the fact he tries to rein her in all the time." **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Adams an eager actress

CAREER Amy Adams begged and hassled Doubt director John Patrick Shanley to cast her in the movie, even after he offered her part to Natalie Portman, imdb.com reports.

The Oscar nominee was a huge fan of the story, which Shanley wrote, and was desperate to appear in the big screen adaptation, despite the odds being stacked up against her.

"They had offered it (to Portman). I called every week, to see if she was doing it," Adams says.

Her luck changed when Portman said no, and she was offered the role of Sister James. But Adams still had to overcome a logistical problem.

"I lied to John Patrick Shanley and told him I was in New York, so when he called, I had to get the red eye (overnight flight) from Los Angeles, to get there," she says. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Osbourne in hot water after insult leads to scrap

DISPUTE Sharon Osbourne is under police investigation after allegedly scuffling with a contestant during a taping of her U.S. reality TV show Rock Of Love: Charm School, imdb.com reports.

Osbourne is said to have flipped when Megan Hauserman insulted her by saying she is only famous because of her marriage to Black Sabbath singer Ozzy Osbourne.

The rock matriarch allegedly ran across the stage, grabbed Hauserman by the hair, and scratched her.

Website TMZ.com reports the pair had to be pulled apart by security guards.

Hauserman went to hospital the following afternoon and filed a report with the Los Angeles Police Department that night.

Authorities have confirmed Osbourne is a suspect in a minor battery allegation, but that no charges have been filed. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

No rush to have kids: Eva

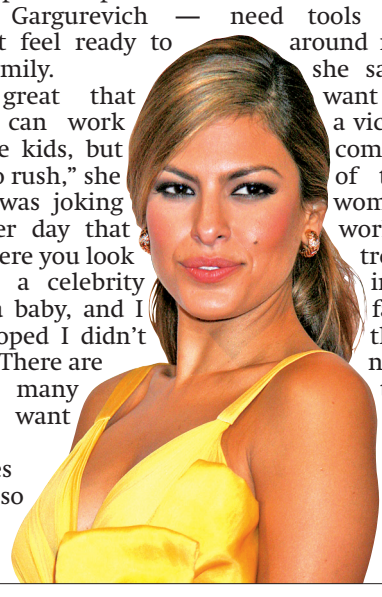
PEOPLE Eva Mendes is in "no rush" to have children, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

Despite being happy in her private life, the actress — who is in a long-term relationship with producer George Gargurevich — does not feel ready to start a family.

"It's great that women can work and have kids, but I'm in no rush," she said. "I was joking the other day that everywhere you look there is a celebrity having a baby, and I said I hoped I didn't catch it. There are just so many things I want to do."

Mendes has also explained her decision to enter a rehab facility earlier this year to be treated for "personal issues."

"Basically, I can't deal with everything life throws at me on my own. I need tools and people around me to help," she says. "I don't want to sound like a victim because, come on, I'm one of the luckiest women in the world. But I have trouble dealing with the fame side of things, so now I see my therapist every week. For me, it's a healthy thing to do." **METRO NEWS SERVICES**



Watts welcomes second child

BIRTH Naomi Watts and Liev Schreiber welcomed their second boy Saturday, People.com reports.

A couple since 2005, Watts, 40, and Schreiber, 41, already have a baby boy, Alexander Pete Schreiber, born July 26, 2007.

Earlier this year, Watts boasted of her first-born, "He's turning pages in the book. He's crawling and standing up. He can wave. I read Goodnight Moon to him every night." **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Lazing around is sexy: Beyoncé

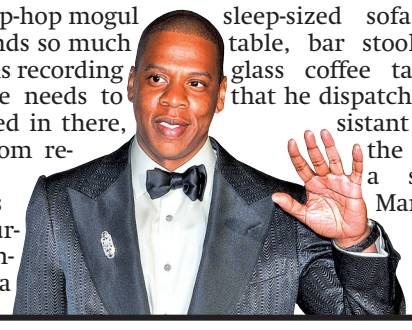
PEOPLE Pop superstar Beyoncé Knowles feels sexiest for rap husband Jay-Z when lazing around her house with bare feet and messy hair, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

"I feel sexiest walking round my house with bare feet and messy hair. Our relationship is very easy. We respect each other. You know someone loves you by the way he treats you," she told British tabloid News of The World. "I think like a guy. If I do something wrong I don't get emotional." **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Workaholic Jay-Z decks out studio

CAREER Hip-hop mogul Jay-Z spends so much time at his recording studio, he needs to keep a bed in there, PageSix.com reports.

Sources say his purchases included a sleep-sized sofa, a bar table, bar stools and a glass coffee table, and that he dispatched his assistant to collect the goods at a store in Manhattan. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**



The Weather Network
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Today Sunny -6° / -10°

Wednesday 90% 5-10cm of snow -3° / -11°

Thursday Mainly sunny -4° / -14°

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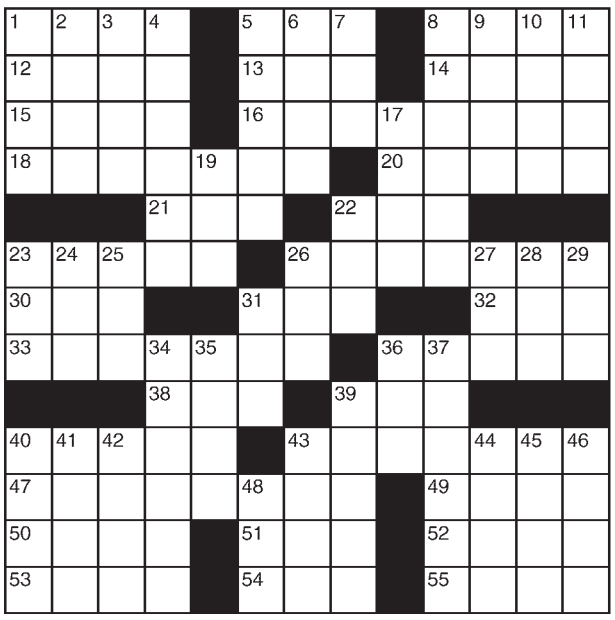

Crossword across

1 Provo's state
5 Big bother
8 Snare
12 Bargain basement event
13 Mediterranean, e.g.
14 Crosby's longtime pal
15 Cicatrix
16 Cooperstown non-honoree
18 Flower's fleshy fruit
20 "Psycho" locale
21 Exactly as written
22 Pirate's beverage
23 Follows orders
26 Pelvis portion
30 Kanga's kid
31 Suitcase
32 "Smoking or —?"
33 Arid
36 Pottery fragment
38 Afternoon affair
39 Gorilla
40 Halloween figure
43 Terra firma
47 Fred Mertz, for one
49 Entreaty
50 Sheltered
51 Egg — yung
52 And others (Lat.)
53 Rolling stone's lack
54 Springtime mo.
55 Lasso

Crossword down

1 Cold War initials
2 Mexican entree
3 "Sad to say"
4 Inquisition crime
5 Jellied mold
6 Profound
7 Cereal grass
8 Blood clot (Pref.)
9 Source
10 Church section
11 Rind
17 Shoot- — (violent movie)
19 That guy's
22 Predetermine
23 Sphere
24 Greet the villain
25 A billion years
26 Dinner for Dobbin
27 Three-match link
28 Neither mate
29 Conclusion
31 Underwear with underwire
34 Chopin pieces
35 Farmer's place?
36 James Bond, e.g.
37 Assistant
39 Passion
40 Showy attractiveness
41 Angel's topper
42 Individuals
43 Let fall
44 Chorus member
45 Tide variety
46 Evans or Carnegie
48 "Son — gun!"

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

2								8
	9	3				7	5	
			6	4	7			
		1	5	8	2	9		
8	5						6	1
		7	1	6	3	5		
			8	2	9			
	8	9				4	2	
6								3

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

A	L	T	O	■	D	E	C	■	S	T	A	B
B	O	O	N	■	I	M	A	■	T	I	D	E
A	C	R	E	■	S	U	P	R	E	M	E	S
B	I	N	D	E	R	■	S	E	V	E	N	S
■	■	■	G	A	O	L	■	F	E	Z	■	■
S	U	P	E	R	B	A	D	■	N	O	N	E
E	K	E	■	P	E	P	E	S	■	N	U	N
Z	E	T	A	■	S	U	P	P	R	E	S	S
■	■	E	D	O	■	P	E	R	I	■	■	■
E	R	R	A	N	T	■	N	Y	L	O	N	S
S	U	P	P	O	S	E	D	■	I	R	O	N
P	L	A	T	■	A	G	O	■	N	A	N	O
Y	E	N	S	■	R	O	N	■	G	L	O	W

4	3	1	6	9	8	7	2	5
8	2	7	3	5	1	6	9	4
9	6	5	2	4	7	1	8	3
2	9	4	8	1	5	3	6	7
3	5	6	4	7	2	8	1	9
1	7	8	9	3	6	4	5	2
6	4	3	1	2	9	5	7	8
5	1	2	7	8	3	9	4	6
7	8	9	5	6	4	2	3	1

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day

Bean and Mushroom Burgers

INGREDIENTS:

1 15-oz (400-g) can red kidney beans
2 medium red onions, about 8 oz (200g) in total
4 tbsp (60 mL) olive oil
2 tbsp (25 mL) red wine vinegar
2 tbsp (25 mL) raw sugar
8 oz (200 g) button mushrooms
1 clove garlic
1 tbsp (15 mL) garam masala
2 tbsp (25 mL) whole-wheat flour
1 small bunch of fresh mint
Salt and black pepper

METHOD:

1. Rinse beans well and spread out on a dish towel to drain. Peel onions.
2. For red onion relish, heat 1 tbsp (15 mL) of olive oil in saucepan. Slice one onion thinly and add to pan with vinegar and sugar. Bring to boil, stirring, then reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 15–20 minutes, until onion is softened and slightly sticky, stirring from time to time. Remove pan from heat and keep warm.
3. Quarter other onion and put into a food processor. Clean mushrooms, add to the onion, and process until finely chopped. Alternatively, chop them both finely by hand.
4. Heat 1 tbsp (15 mL) of olive oil in frying pan, add onion-and-mushroom mixture, and cook over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally for 5–8 minutes, until golden and dry.
5. Peel garlic and crush into mushroom mixture. Stir in garam masala and flour, and cook for 1 minute. Chop enough mint to make 2 tbsp (25 mL). Remove pan from heat, add mint, and season with salt and pepper.
6. Put kidney beans on a deep plate and mash firmly with potato masher, then stir in cooled mushroom mixture.
7. Divide mixture into four and, with lightly floured hands, shape each serving into a burger.
8. Heat remaining 2 tbsp (25 mL) oil in a large frying pan, add bean burgers, and cook over medium-high heat for 6–8 minutes, turning once, until well browned. Warm pita breads.
9. Arrange burgers on a warm dish or individual plates and spoon onion relish over tops. Serve with warm pitas and a green salad. **SERVES 4**

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Jealousy will cause a man to lose the plot. A sudden reversal makes you pensive. Someone's sarcasm takes on new meaning.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Being reliable and motivated will do wonders for your health. Role playing will cause a problem. Wastefulness will get a lot of attention.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
A truth-teller will enjoy a victory. A sweetheart finally learns to apologize. Harmful brainwashing can be eliminated with effort.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Simply ignore other people's temper tantrums. Good manners will lead you into a superb offer. A serious person's hopeless plan will be praised.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
Avoid a friend who has been in your way. Your resistance to decadence will weaken. You can enjoy a crisis if you're not forced to deal with it.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
You'll become a strong and mighty influence. All will be well with a passionate guy. An awkward individual will reveal a mystery.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
An older person will be forgotten. Your feelings are obvious to a tough guy. You can consolidate your gains by playing for keeps.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Don't struggle against fate — accept yours with a smile. Boastful words can be irritating at home. A dilemma may lead to a spat.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
A solitary guy finds happiness. An infamous friend becomes involved in an argument. Silly strife is less than thrilling.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
Don't seethe over a grievance. An opponent will knock on your door. Don't fool around trying to change the facts of life.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
A man is deeply unhappy about his rights. An explanation is out there, but you must find it. Contact with a hardship case stirs up memories.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
A rift in a friendship results from a brazen smile. Peevish remarks will wound others. A heartache will dumbfound everyone.

This day in history

DEC 16, 1497: Vasco da Gama rounds the Cape of Good Hope, the point where Bartolomeu Dias had previously turned back to Portugal.
DEC 16, 1907: Great White Fleet started its circumnavigation of the world.
DEC 16, 1965: Vietnam War: General William Westmoreland sends U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara a request for 243,000 more men by the end of 1966.
DEC 16, 1985: Mafia: In New York City, Paul Castellano and Thomas Bilotti are shot dead on the orders of John Gotti, who assumes leadership of the Gambino family.

WORDY GURDY®

BY TRICKY RICKY KANE

Every answer is a rhyming pair of words (like FAT CAT and DOUBLE TROUBLE), and they will fit in the letter squares. The number after the definition tells you how many syllables in each word.

1. Aggravate a shop salesperson (1)
2. Whatever one-cent coin (2)
3. May sink teeth into (1)
4. One donating a holder of arrows (2)
5. Shabby and untidy TV vampire slayer (2)
6. Careful and sensible pupil (2)
7. Beatle George's military posts (3)

ANSWERS
1. IRK CLERK 2. ANY PENNY 3. MIGHT BITE 4. QUIVER GIVER 5. SCRUFFY BUFFY 6. PRUDENT STUDENT 7. HARRISONS GARRISONS

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